

originated in the area adjacent to the Murdock Diversion Dam. Other springs in that same area now furnish Orem with water. The pipes follow the old railroad tracks for a distance, go up and over the west hill, and drop the water into the city's storage tank.

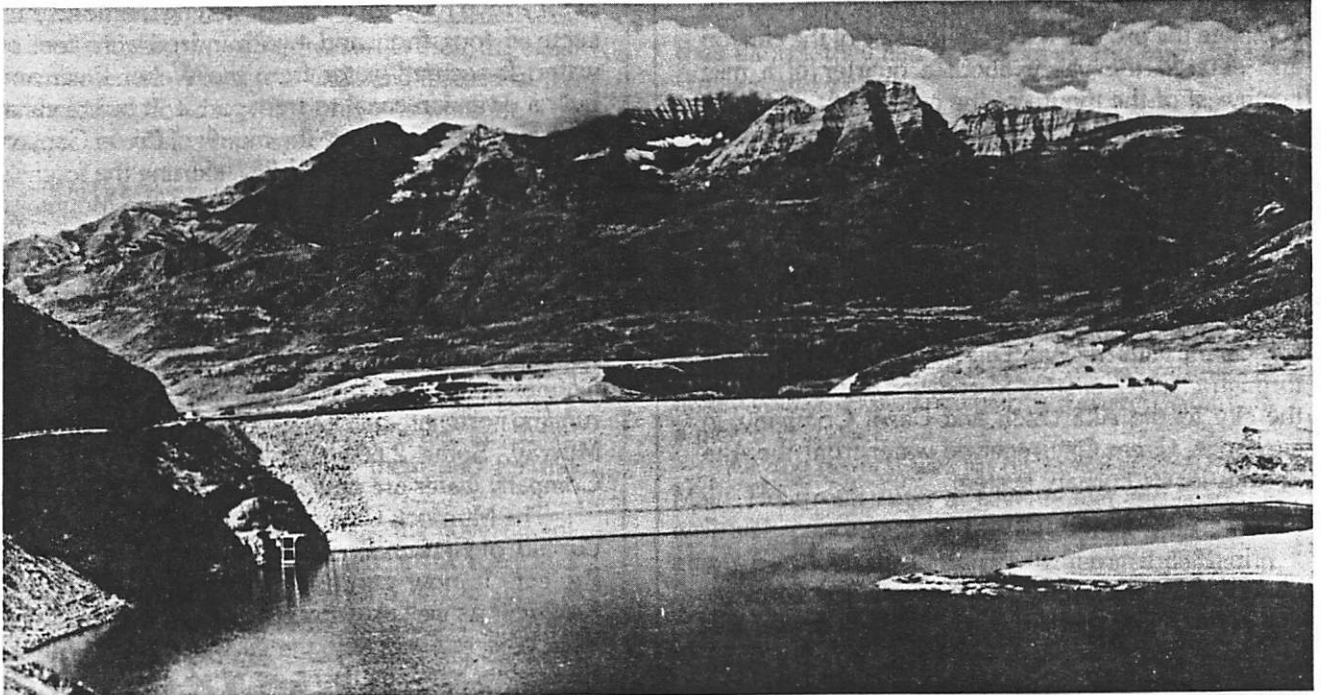
DEER CREEK RESERVOIR

The key structure of the Provo River system now is the Deer Creek Dam located about twelve miles northeast of Provo Bench in Provo Canyon. It was completed by the Bureau of Reclamation in 1941. Weber River water and Duchesne River water, plus some of Provo River's high water, is stored in Deer Creek Reservoir. When Deer Creek Reservoir is full,

was estimated that the reservoir could be built for about \$7,000,000 repayable in forty years without interest.

The matter of persuading companies and cities to sign the government contracts for repayment of construction costs, operating procedures, and losses in case of default, might never been accomplished but for the work of Attorney Arthur V. Watkins. He and Provo City Engineer, Elmer A. Jacob, volunteered their services, without pay, and spent many months persuading individuals and groups that they had everything to gain and nothing to lose by incurring this government indebtedness.

As subscriptions for water were solicited, it



DEER CREEK RESERVOIR
Courtesy BYU Archives

its Weber and Duchesne sources are cut off. The stored water of this reservoir is used mostly for culinary and industrial use. On the bench, 2,254 acre-feet go to the Metropolitan Water District of Orem; 2,000 acre-feet go to the Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company; and 1,600 acre-feet go to the Provo Reservoir Water Users Company. Deer Creek stockholders may use more than they own if they can buy from another stockholder who has more than he needs for the season.

If it were not for the Deer Creek Reservoir Project, Orem would have stopped growing in 1940. Neither Geneva Steel Plant nor any of its related industries would have been built. When Reed Smoot was senator, building such a dam was considered necessary by government and community leaders. Plans were made in the 1930s during the depression. It

became obvious that agricultural wealth was not sufficient to pay the government obligations off over a forty-year period. It was then that Arthur V. Watkins conceived the idea that cities and towns could subscribe for water through Metropolitan Water Boards. A number of towns and cities in Utah County were very hesitant to create these boards. They felt that they had sufficient water for the future; but, today they are sorry they did not participate more fully.

Provo City subscribed for 8,000 acre feet; American Fork, Pleasant Grove, and Lehi each subscribed for 500 acre feet; Orem could qualify only for 2,240 acre feet because of its low assessed valuation. Provo Reservoir Water Users Company subscribed for 16,000 acre feet which was the largest agricultural subscription. Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company subscribed for 800 acre feet.

When there were still more subscriptions available, Salt Lake City agreed to pay the additional amount. In later years, when every little company and city in the area was begging for more Deer Creek water, Salt Lake City was blamed for taking the surplus.

The cost of building the reservoir increased steadily because of delays and inflation. Even though the final cost was more than three times the original estimate—\$24,000,000 or \$240 an acre-foot, Deer Creek Reservoir is still the cheapest and surest water supply in the area.

The completion of the Deer Creek Reservoir fulfilled a prophecy of Brigham Young as recorded in the diary of Ben H. Bullock:

Some day an earthen dam will be constructed in Provo Canyon across the Provo River making a large reservoir, and water will be taken from this reservoir around the foothills of this valley into Salt Lake Valley and the people of Salt Lake City will get much of their supply of water from this source.

MUNICIPAL WELLS

Orem City now has six wells which pump water into two 3,000,000-gallon tanks on a hill at the base of Timpanogos. A higher tank stores 2,000,000 gallons of



MUNICIPAL WELL, 1946: Jim Blair and Willard Pierce. Courtesy Mrs. Willard Pierce.

pure water from canyon springs. All water flows into the city water system through 134 miles of pipe to 40,000 people. During the month of July 1976, Orem residents and industries used 465,540,000 gallons of water or 11,389 gallons per person. Orem City leaders plan to fill the water needs of future citizens with one-third of the supply coming from wells, one-third from springs, and one-third from storage.

No wells may now be dug without the permission of the State Engineer. This regulation is to protect current well owners whose supplies might dry up if too many taps are made on the same underground stream. For this reason, Orem City wells go below the water-bearing strata that supplies adjacent cities; the wells are between five hundred and one thousand feet deep. Today's wells are very different from those dug by Alf Skinner. They are located by a geologist instead of a water witch, and a drill does the digging and lays the pipe.

Orem City now buys all the irrigation water of good title that is for sale within its boundaries. It becomes part of the culinary supply as soon as it is purified. Until then, it is rented out by the city to pay for various costs incurred.

LITIGATION

In 1851, cities had been given control of irrigation water in their charters. From then on Provo City exercised full control over the Provo River from the mouth of the canyon to the lake. Provo City often questioned means of measurement and apportionment between interests. In 1882, Provo City sued one of its own citizens, Newel Knight, a superintendent of the Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company for taking and using water from the Provo River without the authority of the water master. Since the Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company Trustees had directed Mr. Knight to take the water, they authorized him to get legal help. The Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company won the case.

Before 1880, water was appurtenant to land and was the property of the Territory of Utah. The Territorial legislature of 1880 changed this by making water personal property that could be bought and sold. Irrigation districts were reorganized as water stock companies where water could be used for speculation or any other reason. The State could not intervene to protect public rights or to protest excessive grants. Judges knew very little about irrigation matters, so when cases were brought before them in court, they frequently granted more water than was available. As a result, streams were over-appropriated which eventually rendered some water rights worthless.

In 1884, a convention of all Provo River interests was called at Heber City to consider better management of water distribution. A tentative agreement was reached, but it proved unsatisfactory. In 1894, Provo City filed suits against various canal companies that were never brought to trial.

In 1901, legislative change was made in an effort to define rights. The State was divided into divisions, each headed by a superintendent who had been

appointed by the State Engineer. The law required records of all rights to be kept. It allowed existing rights to continue if they were being used beneficially. Now rights could be acquired by appropriation. Certain rules were applied to rights that could be apportioned. One rule was that rights were to be measured by a fractional part of the whole supply.

By 1902, Telluride Power Company had acquired power water rights and the Nunn brothers had built a plant on the Provo River about two miles up the canyon to create a market for power. They later built the Olmstead plant at the mouth of the canyon. The Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company trustees favored the plant and made agreements that protected their rights and secured certain benefits.

In the fall of 1913, the Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company hired a young civil engineer and stockholder, Frank Wentz, to conduct hydrographic studies of the land serviced by the company. Not long thereafter he was made commissioner over the Provo River system. Mr. Wentz remained Provo River Commissioner until his death in 1958.

Perhaps the most difficult time of Mr. Wentz's service was before the Deer Creek Reservoir supplemented and evened out yearly water supplies so that no crops were lost to drought. He was often confronted by desperate farmers who

begged for a little more water to save a crop or an orchard. His reply always left the decision to the petitioner: "I'd like to turn the water to you, but first, tell me, which of your neighbors do you want me to take it from?"

The Provo Bench Canal still provides water to farmers. Other canal companies also serve the benchland. Canal and laterals are lined tightly so that water, work, and expense are saved. Water is also saved by better turnout devices. New metal and concrete gates and weirs allow accurate measurements, and a daily record can be maintained. The flow of a stream several hundred miles away can be known by dialing a certain telephone number and listening to a recording device installed at a measuring point. One hundred fourteen years have passed since the first irrigation canal was completed and irrigation is now a technical science.

Orem's leaders have always understood and planned for future water needs. Because of this, Orem City is in a most favorable position with ample water for future growth. In 1976, Orem City Engineer, Russell Brown, reports that Orem owns all of Heiselt Springs, has the use of Alta Springs, owns stock in the Provo Bench Canal and Irrigation Company and also the Provo Reservoir Water Users Company, and owns several culinary wells.



OLD WATER FLUME, PROVO CANYON
Courtesy Theresia Clayton Pyne

It Happened In Orem

CHAPTER FOUR ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY

by
Leon M. Frazier, Jr.

It is a mistake to believe that history on Provo Bench started when the Mormons began settling there. Important economic history took place long before that, for explorers and Indians used to traverse and live on the bench. Provo Bench, which became Orem City, was the remaining shore level of the ancient Lake Bonneville, a vast inland body of water that occupied much of the land now called the Great Basin.

Skeleton Of Prehistoric Mammoth Is Uncovered In Grand View Excavation

Remains of a hairy mammoth, a Utah resident of the Ice Age of 2,000,000 to 25,000,000 years ago, are being disinterred at a point just 15 feet off the highway in front of the Daniel E. Thomas residence in Grand View.

The find is being brought to light by Professor Golden York of the University of Utah, who thus far has found a complete jawbone, several ribs, a tooth weighing four to five pounds, and is at present excavating about a huge bony structure believed to be the pelvis.

Professor York, rather reticent as yet to say much of the find until he has had time to examine the skeleton structure more minutely, is enthusiastic about the discovery. He expects it to be the finest specimen of its kind yet revealed in Utah.

By Frederic J. Pack, University of Utah head geologist and Professor York's fellow scientist, examined the digging ground yesterday and photographed what he could of the discoveries. Both are highly enthused at prospects for an interesting find.

Professor York commented this morning that the bones are in excellent condition. As rapidly as they are disinterred they are covered with shellacking preparation, carefully wrapped in gunny sacks for transportation to the university's laboratory, and there will be carefully freed of all foreign covering.

Reports of early explorers indicate that the Provo River Valley was originally covered by grasses, not sagebrush as the Mormons found it. In 1776, Escalante, a Franciscan priest representing the Governor of New Mexico, explored Utah Valley. His observations of the benchland area are recorded in Provo, Pioneer Mormon City:

And on the south and in other directions there are very spacious areas of good land. In all of it there are good and very abundant pastures, and in some places it produces flax and hemp in such quantities that it looks as though they [the Indians] had planted it on purpose.

His exploring party named the valley, Our Lady of Mercy of the Timpanogotzis, today's Utah Valley.

THE UTE INDIANS

Many bands of Ute Indians roamed the Provo Bench area when it was covered with grasses. In 1849, Lieutenant John W. Gunnison of the U.S. Topographical Engineers wrote concerning the Utes:

This tribe consists of several bands under different chieftains, united by a common language and affinities as well as by numerous inter-marriages. They range over a large region of country, extending from California to New Mexico. They are a superstitious race, and have many cruel customs. Some tribes are reputed good warriors.

There was a period of time when the Utes had to wander on foot to gather food because they didn't have any horses. Eventually, they obtained horses

from the Spanish in the Southwest either by stealing, trading, or trapping. The horses fed on the grasses. This in itself could have greatly altered the vast pastures and reduced them to sagebrush. The transition from grassland to sagebrush didn't take long.

The Indians who once lived in what is now called Utah Valley were a nomadic people. They moved from one place to another, including the Provo Bench and were dependent upon a searching, gathering, and hunting economy. They gathered nuts, seeds, berries, roots, and various vegetables for food. Throughout the Great Basin they hunted buffalo, deer, moose, bear, antelope, and mountain sheep; they also trapped beavers, and squirrels. Many of the Indians lived on coyotes, jackrabbits, fowl, mice, lizards, snakes, and large insects.

When enough food was present for a tribe, the Ute's dome-shaped wickiups covered with shredded sagebrush and their more advanced sweat lodges were arranged in a circle so that the doors all faced into a central arena. It was in such an arena that various strange dances and games took place, accompanied by music produced within the lodges by the scraping of notched sticks.

Provo, Pioneer Mormon City mentions an old document in the Spanish Archives of New Mexico by Manuel Mestes which gives evidence of a trip made to Timpanogos Lake [Utah Lake] in 1813 by some Mexicans who wanted to buy Indian slaves. The slave trade was important to the Indian economy. An old mountain man named Uncle Dick Wootton who trapped animals in Utah in 1837-38 later stated:

It was no uncommon thing in those days to see a party of Mexicans in that country buying Indians, and while we were trapping there I sent a lot of peltries to Taos by a party of those same slave traders.

Bill Hickman, early Mormon pioneer, wrote about the Indians who inhabited the benchland areas:

This [Provo] river was claimed by a strong band of Indians. These Utah Indians went by different names, such as Timpa-Utes, Pi-Utes, Yampa-Utes and Gosh-Utes, each having its Chief, fishing and hunting grounds, etc., which they claimed as their own; but in reality they were all the same tribe, spoke the same language, and would hunt and fish on each other's lands, as a general thing, unmolested. Sometimes these different bands would have difficulty; but in war with the whites they were all united.

MORMON SETTLERS

The Mormon pioneers emigrated to the valley of Great Salt Lake in 1847 on what was an arduous and death-inflicting journey. Since they had been exiled from their beautiful city of Nauvoo, Illinois, their greatest desire was to find a place to build a new city of Zion. The mountain desert in Mexican Territory was to be their new home. Brigham Young had envisioned the west as a place of economic security for the Mormons. Through his wise leadership and the industry of the pioneers, the Mormons prospered. The success of the Mormons in establishing a stable economy is an outstanding example of dedication.

Mormon headquarters were established in the arid and salty Great Salt Lake Valley in July, and by the end of the year, most of the surrounding regions, including Utah Valley had been explored, surveyed, and closely analyzed. Leonard Arrington reports in his economic history of the Great Basin:

All of this research ... confirmed the wisdom of the original intention to locate in the Salt Lake Valley. Cache Valley was too cold; Utah Valley was inhabited by Indians. Other valleys were too dry.

William Clayton, Mormon pioneer, indicates in his journal that Indian threats were a main reason for not immediately establishing Mormon colonies near Utah Lake and on Provo Bench:

The Utah tribe of Indians inhabit the region around the Utah Lake and are bad people. If they catch a man alone, they are sure to rob and abuse him if they don't kill him, but parties of men are in no danger.

George Washington Bean, Mormon pioneer and explorer, recorded in his autobiography that in 1849, Brigham Young sent a group of colonists to settle the Provo River area, "for the purpose of farming and fishing and of instructing the Indians in cultivating the earth and of teaching them civilization." Bean recorded the account of the direct meeting between the Mormon colonists and Indians on Provo Bench. Within two and one-half miles of Timpanogos River (Provo River), the colony of pioneer families were greeted:

... by a Young Indian Brave on horseback dashing toward us as fast as he could ride, throwing his arms and performing all sorts of wild gesticulations. When he got within about six rods of our head team, he jumped off his horse, threw his buffalo robe across our path and warned us not to pass that designated point. The Indians had got some idea of our intention to make settlement at the Timpanogos River, and this young brave named Ang-a-Te-Wats volunteered to stop us until an understanding could be arrived at. Dimick Huntington, our interpreter, told over all our good desires and intentions and that President Young, the Great Mormon Chief had sent us, and that we would like to be Too-ge-tid-a-boo—good friends—with the natives and do them

much good if allowed to settle with them. The little brave dashed off to report to the tribe, and we slowly moved on. Presently a large party met us with the War Chief at their head, and we all stopped and talked the matter over again. The party seemed satisfied, and we moved on and were allowed to camp on the north side of the river. Many had sucker fish for dinner, but father and I had a fat stewed crane I killed with his rifle during the day.

Natural resources were soon utilized by the Mormon settlers. The colonists quickly built a big fort with twelve-foot long pickets, private corrals, gates, and houses all out of cottonwood timber. Cottonwood timber was plentiful along the river.

A controversial issue between the Mormons and the Indians was the slave trade. The following account by J. A. Jones illustrates how difficult it was for the Mormons to civilize the Indians and convince them of the evils of slavery:

Stopping this slave business helped to sour some of Walker's band [a powerful Indian band]. They were in the habit of raiding on the Pahutes and low tribes, taking their children prisoners and selling them. Next year when they came up and camped on the Provo Bench, they had some Indian children for sale. They offered them to the Mormons who declined buying. Arapine, Walker's brother, became enraged saying that the Mormons had stopped the Mexicans from buying these children; that they had no right to do so, unless they bought them themselves. Several of us were present when he took one of these children by the heels and dashed its brains out on the hard ground, after which he threw the body towards us, telling us we had no hearts, or we would have bought it and saved its life. This was a strange argument, but it was the argument of an enraged savage. I never heard of any successful attempts to buy children afterwards by the Mexicans. If done at all, it was secretly.

The Mexicans were prevented from buying Indian slaves because the Mormons took them to court and prosecuted them.

MILITARY CAMPS

In August of 1857, word came to Salt Lake that United States Army troops led by General Sidney Johnston were advancing toward Deseret Territory because of presidential orders from James B. Buchanan. Johnston's Army spent that winter at Camp Scott near Fort Bridger. By March 1858, Governor Young had made the decision that Salt Lake Valley would have to be evacuated and, if needs be, the buildings burned to the ground to avoid government suppression. Residents of Salt Lake Valley moved south to Utah Valley across the Provo Bench. Over 30,000 people moved into Utah Valley from northern areas. By the end of May the entire move was accomplished.

On 26 June 1858 Johnston's Army found Salt Lake City empty. He and his troops marched on to Cedar Valley, where they established Camp Floyd.

The Annual History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for Tuesday, 26 October 1858 indicates that General Johnston was invited to move his troops from Camp Floyd to the Provo Bench:

A company of merchants and campfollowers have gone to establish a city on the Provo Bench to be called Centre City. It is reported that they have invited General Johnston to locate a military post there, and move in the spring with his troops.

Governor Cumming requested President Young to send men to occupy all the land. The president [Brigham Young] said he did not wish to interfere, but would let them build a city, it will be a long time first, unless they get the "Mormons" to build it for them, and then they would cheat them out of their pay; he would like them to get the apostates to build the city for them.

A military post was not established on Provo Bench. Eventually, Johnston's troops left Utah, and the Salt Lake City residents moved back to their homes. Because their settlement in Utah Valley was temporary, these people had little economic effect on the benchland area.

The Nauvoo Legion, which had been partially reorganized in Utah on 27 March 1852, used the bench for their military drills. Andrew Jenson, LDS Church historian, wrote in his autobiography:

In October 1870, I had my first experience in military training, a county military drill being held at Camp Burton, located on the so-called Dry Creek, on the Provo Bench, about four miles southeast of Pleasant Grove. About 4,000 men were gathered from different parts of Utah County, and the drill was carried out with strict discipline and order. This was a part of the annual drilling of the Nauvoo Legion. I rather enjoyed the exercises and at once felt a desire to train as a soldier and aspire to become an officer in that military organization. This, however, was not to be in my case, for

after two more annual drills, which I attended and enjoyed, orders were given by Acting Governor Shaffer of Utah to the "Mormons" to cease their military evolutions.

On 30 July 1870, Fort Rawlins, a temporary military fort was established on the bench two and one-half miles north of the Provo River. The military was stationed there to protect Provo citizens from Indians, but a permanent fort was never built. For several reasons, the temporary fort was closed down by June 1871.

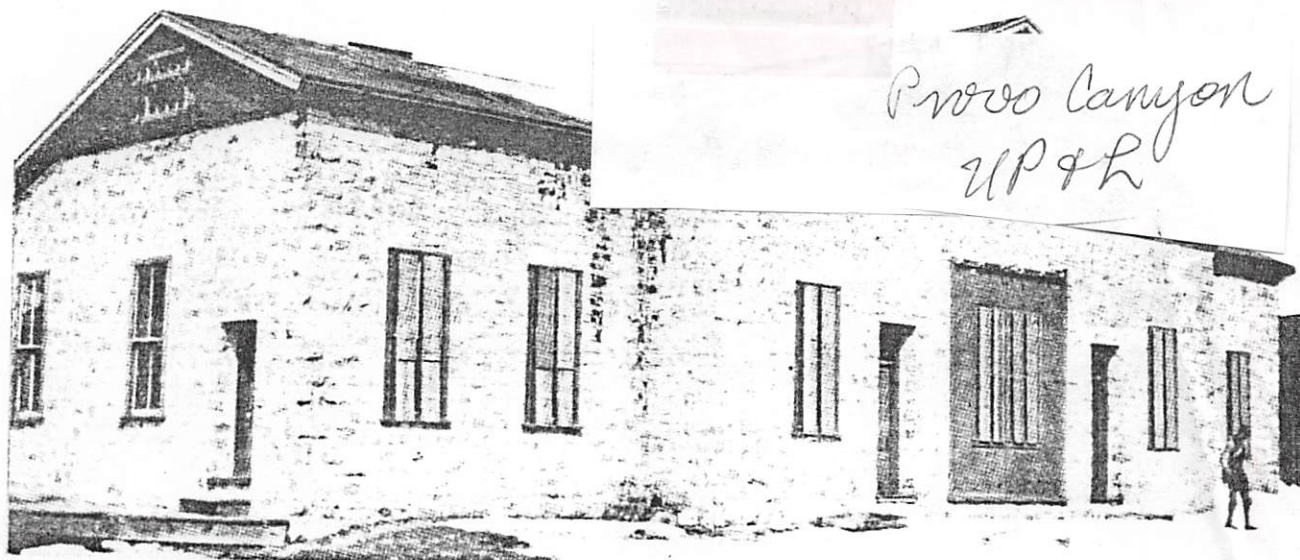
Fort Rawlins was undesirable from the viewpoints of the command and the soldiers. There was poor communication with higher command and the facilities were poor. Contempt from the townspeople worsened these problems to the point of open rebellion among some 20 of the 40 soldiers stationed at the fort.

On 22 September 1890, drunken soldiers marched prominent Provo men down West Main Street at gunpoint. Besides the verbal abuse inflicted on these men, property damage was incurred by other citizens whose houses were shot at by the passing soldiers.

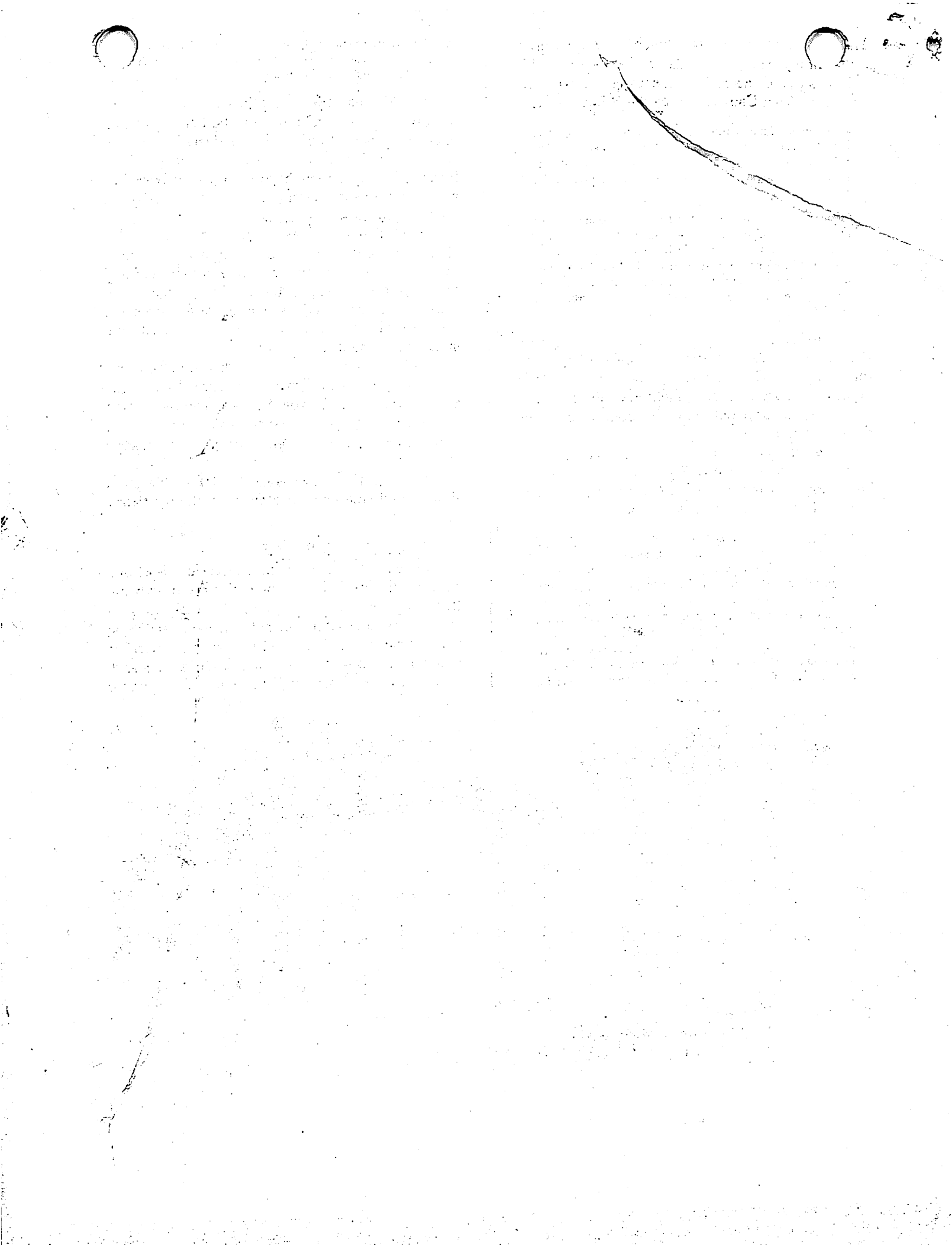
Because Fort Rawlins existed for such a short time, it had little economic effect on the benchland area.

HYDROELECTRIC POWER

In 1890, Mr. L. L. Nunn successfully built and operated the first industrial hydroelectric power plant, the Ames Plant, near Telluride, Colorado. It transmitted alternating current at high voltage three miles away. In 1894, he began looking for possible hydroelectric power sites farther west in the Rocky Mountains. He chose the Provo River as the site for



NUNN'S STATION, PROVO CANYON
Courtesy Utah Power and Light Company



the Nunn's Station which was operational in 1897. By the next year the turbine provided 750 kilowatts of power to a gold mine and a mill in Mercur, Utah, thirty-two miles away. This was a milestone in the history of electrical transmission because this electricity was being transmitted by the first 44,000-volt transmission line built in the United States.

In 1900, the Telluride Power Company was formed. The Nunn's Station was soon replaced by the Olmstead Plant which became operational in 1904. It supplied surrounding areas and increasingly distant areas (no farther than 50 miles away) with electricity.

The Olmstead Plant was unique in that it was equipped to provide on-the-job training in electrical



OLMSTEAD PLANT
Courtesy BYU Archives

engineering for its employees. Mr. L. L. Nunn conceived this company-employee relationship. His brother, Paul Nunn, directed the program, also used at other plants, that eventually became the Telluride Institute. The Telluride Association, as it was named in 1911, is presently seated at Cornell University. The impact, though, of that early program is remarkable. At the time, the Olmstead Plant offered the only competent training program in electrical engineering besides the program taught at Ohio State. Some young men from the bench area were trained under this two-year program and became outstanding engineers.

In 1912, Utah Power and Light Company was formed; it purchased the Telluride Power Company, which included the Olmstead Plant. This plant is still operated under the direction of Utah Power and Light Company.

TRANSPORTATION

State Street in Orem was originally established as part of the great corridor highway that linked Salt Lake City with Southern Utah and California. State Street opened for travel in the 1850's, was eight rods wide and ran between what is now 2000 South and 2000 North in Orem. What originally was a dusty, rutted, rocky road in the summer, and a muddy, sloshy road in the winter is now a paved, modern road that is part of U. S. Highway 91.

The transition from buggies and carriages to automobiles did not occur overnight on Provo Bench. The evolution of modern transportation was gradual, yet inevitable and helpful to the benchland. The creaky Model-T's and the fragile trucks that appeared early in the century on the bench can't compare with the cars and diesel trucks that now traverse Utah's highways, but they did increase trade with neighboring towns and cities.

Many roads were graveled in order to strengthen them. The old Provo Canyon Road was graveled in 1911-12. Early settlers hauled loads of rock from their benchland farms to gravel the old Canyon Road. The highway department crushed the rock to make the hard gravel. As transportation improved, trade and commercial activity increased.

By 1910, Provo Bench was becoming a prosperous agricultural community. Accessibility to outside markets inevitably required a railroad. Electrically driven railroads were fairly new, so it is understandable why in 1913 "newspapers of Utah were virtually unanimous in proclaiming the building of the Orem Railroad the biggest event of that year." The Salt Lake and Utah Railroad, or the Orem Line as it was called by many people, was a 67-mile electric rail line financed and constructed by A. J. Orem and Company under the direction of Walter C. Orem. The line from Salt Lake to Provo, which passed through Provo Bench, was opened for electric car service on 24 July, 1913. By 1917, the Orem Line extended from Salt Lake to Payson.

A railroad depot was eventually built in Orem, but because of highway improvements and increased use of automobiles in the 1920's, passenger business declined on the Orem Line. In the 1930's, the line went into receivership, and a foreclosure sale of all properties took place in the first few months of 1938.

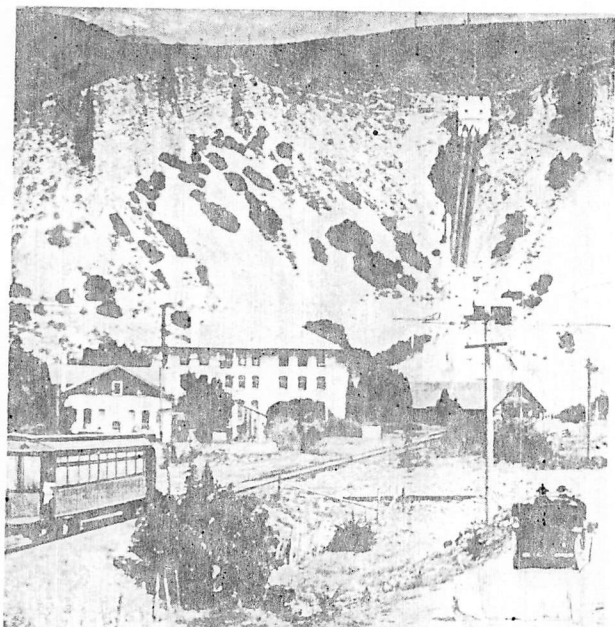
A NEW NAME FOR THE BENCH

Some people on the bench recognized the need for an organization that would promote better business conditions. One day in April, 1914, Oscar H. Anderson, a salesman, rode on horseback to nearly every house on the bench trying to get residents to attend a commercial meeting to be held at Parcell's

the Nunn's Station which was operational in 1897. By the next year the turbine provided 750 kilowatts of power to a gold mine and a mill in Mercur, Utah, thirty-two miles away. This was a milestone in the history of electrical transmission because this electricity was being transmitted by the first 44,000-volt transmission line built in the United States.

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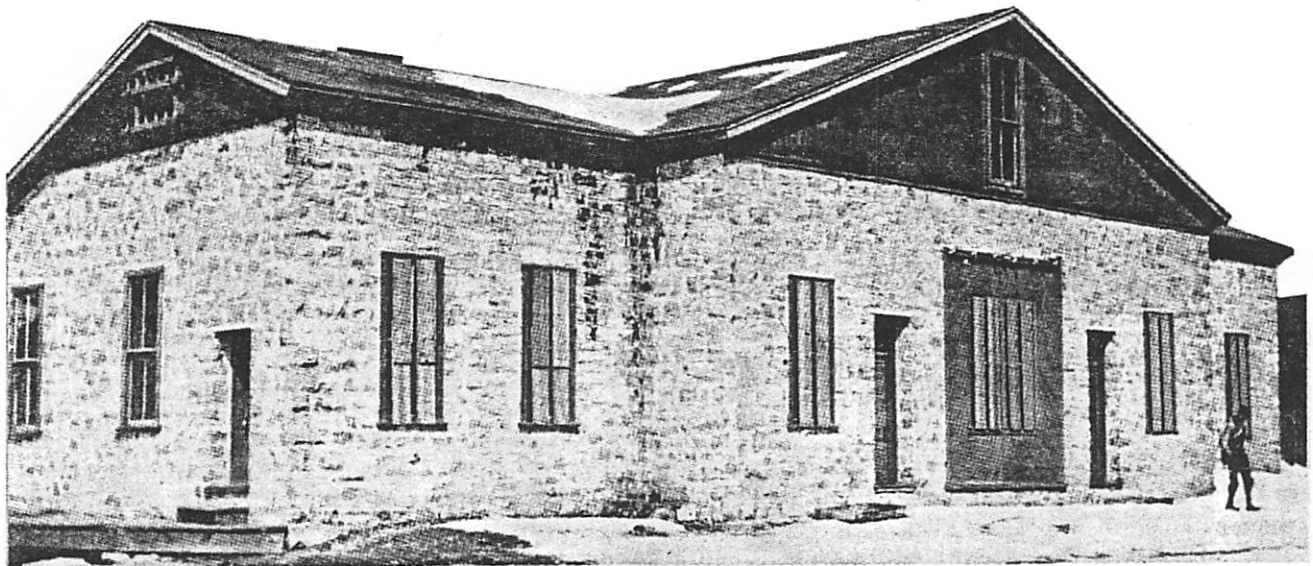
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